

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
ICA-11 AID-05 EB-08 COME-00 TRSE-00 OMB-01 /090 W
-----130579 131740Z /43

R 130712Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY VALLETTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8327
INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
USMISSION USNATO
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 VALLETTA 02134

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, PINT, XG
SUBJECT: OPPOSITION LEADER CALLS ON MINTOFF TO
- RENEW MANDATE IF EUROPEAN DIALOGUE FAILS

1. SUMMARY: DR. EDDIE FENECH ADAMI, LEADER OF THE
NATIONALIST (OPPOSITION) PARTY ADDRESSED A NATIONALIST
PARTY MEETING JULY 8. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, FENECH
ADAMI CALLED ON MINTOFF TO GO BACK TO THE PEOPLE TO RENEW
HIS MANDATE IF HE FAILS TO OBTAIN THE ECONOMIC GUARANTEES
HE IS SEEKING FROM EUROPE. END SUMMARY.

2. AFTER NOTING THAT MARCH 31, 1979 WAS APPROACHING,
FENECH ADAMI CALLED ON MINTOFF TO TELL THE MALTESE PEOPLE
CLEARLY AND SPECIFICALLY WHAT HE IS ASKING FROM THE
EUROPEANS. HE EMPHASIZED THAT UNLESS THE MALTESE PEOPLE
WERE KEPT INFORMED THEY WOULD NOT KNOW, IN THE CASE OF A
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BREAKDOWN OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH EUROPE, WHETHER TO HOLD THE
EUROPEANS OR MINTOFF RESPONSIBLE. HE ASSERTED THAT THE
"BLACKMAIL" WHICH SUCCEEDED SEVEN YEARS AGO WAS NOT LIKELY
TO SUCCEED AGAIN AND THAT THE MALTESE DESERVED TO KNOW, IF
NEGOTIATIONS FAILED, WHETHER IT WAS DUE TO EUROPEAN
INTRANSIGENCE OR BECAUSE MINTOFF DECIDED TO "CHOOSE
ANOTHER PATH".

3. COMMENTING ON QADHAFI'S RECENT VISIT, FENECH ADAMI OBSERVED THAT THE NATIONALIST PARTY WANTED FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH ALL STATES INCLUDING LIBYA, BUT THAT HE MUST NEVERTHELESS SPEAK OUT AGAINST QADHAFI'S INTERPRETATION OF MALTESE HISTORY. HE SAID THAT CONTRARY TO QADHAFI'S CLAIMS, MALTA'S HISTORY, TRADITION AND CULTURE WERE EUROPEAN AND NOTHING WAS GOING TO CHANGE THAT.

4. THE NATIONALS, FENECH ADAMI WENT ON, DID NOT WANT SECURITY GUARANTEES FROM LIBYA BECAUSE OF ITS CLOSE ASSOCIATION WITH RUSSIA. IT WAS CLEAR FROM WHAT "THE REDS" WERE DOING IN AFRICA, THAT THEY WANTED TO EXTEND THEIR INVOLVEMENT IN OTHER COUNTRIES. MALTA DOES NOT FEAR THE UNITED STATES, GERMANY OR ITALY BUT DOES FEAR THE OTHER SIDE. FENECH ADAMI ALSO REJECTED MILITARY TRAINING AND ASSISTANCE FROM LIBYA, SAYING "WE DO NOT NEED ARMS FROM LIBYA; WHAT WE ARE AFTER IS SECURITY FOR MALTA."

5. FINALLY FENECH ADAMI CHARACTERIZED QADHAFI'S REFUSAL TO SETTLE THE MEDIAN LINE DISPUTE AS A "SLAP IN THE FACE". HE SAID THAT AFTER SEVEN YEARS PROGRESS SHOULD HAVE BEEN MADE ON THIS MATTER.

6. AFTER NOTING THAT A NATIONALIST MP DELIVERED MINTOFF'S LETTER TO PRESIDENT CARTER, THE NATIONALIST LEADER RE-CONFIDENTIAL

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AFFIRMED HIS HOPE THAT AGREEMENT WITH ITALY AND FRANCE WOULD BE REACHED AND THAT ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE FROM THEM WOULD BE PROVIDED SO THAT MALTA WOULD BE ABLE TO "AVOID ANY UNTRIED PATHS".

7. FOLLOWING UP FENECH ADAMI'S ANNOUNCEMENT THAT A NATIONALIST MP HAD DELIVERED MINTOFF'S LETTER TO PRESIDENT CARTER, THE JULY 10 TIMES OF MALTA, A GENERALLY PRO-NATIONALIST NEWSPAPER, CARRIED A FRONT-PAGE STORY IN WHICH DR. MARIO FELICE WAS IDENTIFIED AS MINTOFF'S EMISSARY. THE ARTICLE AND A JULY 11 EDITORIAL LAUDED THE NATIONALIST PARTY FOR COOPERATING WITH MINTOFF IN HIS APPROACH TO THE US THEREBY DEMONSTRATING THAT THE NATIONALISTS WERE CONCERNED ABOUT MALTA'S INTERESTS FIRST AND PARTY INTERESTS SECOND. (THE NATIONALISTS HAVE GENERALLY PUT A GOOD PUBLIC FACE ON FELICE'S ROLE AS MINTOFF'S EMISSARY AND AT LEAST SO FAR HAVE SHOWN NO RESENTMENT TOWARD US PRIVATELY.)

8. COMMENT: FENECH ADAMI'S CALL FOR A FRESH MANDATE FROM THE MALTESE PEOPLE, SHOULD MINTOFF'S DIALOGUE WITH THE EUROPEANS FAIL, STRIKES US AS GOOD POLITICS FROM HIS

STANDPOINT. MINTOFF HAS REPEATEDLY ASSERTED THAT HE WAS ELECTED ON A PLATFORM THAT CALLED FOR SECURITY AND ECONOMIC GUARANTEES BY NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES. IF THIS EFFORT FAILED THEN THE GOVERNMENT WOULD HAVE TO FALL BACK ON THE SECOND ALTERNATIVE CONTAINED IN THE LABOR PARTY PLATFORM WHICH, ACCORDING TO MINTOFF, IS LESS DESIRABLE; NAMELY, BILATERAL DEFENSE PACTS AND THE ECONOMIC COOPERATION AGREEMENTS WITH THOSE NATIONS WILLING TO ENTER INTO SUCH ARRANGEMENTS WITH MALTA. SINCE MINTOFF HIMSELF HAS IDENTIFIED THE SECOND ALTERNATIVE AS CLEARLY SECOND BEST AND IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT MOST MALTESE WOULD PROBABLY BE VERY UNCOMFORTABLE WITH AN EXCLUSIVE ARRANGEMENT WITH

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 VALLETTA 02134

LIBYA, FENECH ADAMI IS ON STRONG POLITICAL GROUND IN CALLING FOR ANOTHER ELECTION IF MINTOFF DOES NOT GET WHAT HE WANTS FROM THE EUROPEANS.

9. THIS DOES NOT MEAN, HOWEVER, THAT MINTOFF WOULD IN FACT GO BACK TO THE PEOPLE. GIVEN THE DEGREE OF PARTY DISCIPLINE HE ENJOYS AND HIS PERSONAL DETERMINATION TO MAKE EVERY MAJOR FOREIGN POLICY AND DOMESTIC DECISION, WE BELIEVE IT HIGHLY UNLIKELY THAT HE WILL CALL FOR NEW ELECTIONS REGARDLESS OF THE OUTCOME OF HIS DIALOGUE WITH THE EUROPEANS. LAINGEN

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